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### Role of the Ballot

#### The state is inevitable- speaking the language of power through policymaking is the only way to create social change in debate.

Coverstone 5 Alan Coverstone (masters in communication from Wake Forest, longtime debate coach) “Acting on Activism: Realizing the Vision of Debate with Pro-social Impact” Paper presented at the National Communication Association Annual Conference November 17th 2005 JW 11/18/15

An important concern emerges when Mitchell describes reflexive fiat as a contest strategy capable of “eschewing the power to directly control external actors” (1998b, p. 20). Describing debates about what our government should do as attempts to control outside actors is debilitating and disempowering. Control of the US government is exactly what an active, participatory citizenry is supposed to be all about. After all, if democracy means anything, it means that citizens not only have the right, they also bear the obligation to discuss and debate what the government should be doing. Absent that discussion and debate, much of the motivation for personal political activism is also lost. Those who have co-opted Mitchell’s argument for individual advocacy often quickly respond that nothing we do in a debate round can actually change government policy, and unfortunately, an entire generation of debaters has now swallowed this assertion as an article of faith. The best most will muster is, “Of course not, but you don’t either!” The assertion that nothing we do in debate has any impact on government policy is one that carries the potential to undermine Mitchell’s entire project. If there is nothing we can do in a debate round to change government policy, then we are left with precious little in the way of pro-social options for addressing problems we face. At best, we can pursue some Pilot-like hand washing that can purify us as individuals through quixotic activism but offer little to society as a whole. It is very important to note that Mitchell (1998b) tries carefully to limit and bound his notion of reflexive fiat by maintaining that because it “views fiat as a concrete course of action, it is bounded by the limits of pragmatism” (p. 20). Pursued properly, the debates that Mitchell would like to see are those in which the relative efficacy of concrete political strategies for pro-social change is debated. In a few noteworthy examples, this approach has been employed successfully, and I must say that I have thoroughly enjoyed judging and coaching those debates. The students in my program have learned to stretch their understanding of their role in the political process because of the experience. Therefore, those who say I am opposed to Mitchell’s goals here should take care at such a blanket assertion. However, contest debate teaches students to combine personal experience with the language of political power. Powerful personal narratives unconnected to political power are regularly co-opted by those who do learn the language of power. One need look no further than the annual state of the Union Address where personal story after personal story is used to support the political agenda of those in power. The so-called role-playing that public policy contest debates encourage promotes active learning of the vocabulary and levers of power in America. Imagining the ability to use our own arguments to influence government action is one of the great virtues of academic debate. Gerald Graff (2003) analyzed the decline of argumentation in academic discourse and found a source of student antipathy to public argument in an interesting place. I’m up against…their aversion to the role of public spokesperson that formal writing presupposes. It’s as if such students can’t imagine any rewards for being a public actor or even imagining themselves in such a role. This lack of interest in the public sphere may in turn reflect a loss of confidence in the possibility that the arguments we make in public will have an effect on the world. Today’s students’ lack of faith in the power of persuasion reflects the waning of the ideal of civic participation that led educators for centuries to place rhetorical and argumentative training at the center of the school and college curriculum. (Graff, 2003, p. 57) The power to imagine public advocacy that actually makes a difference is one of the great virtues of the traditional notion of fiat that critics deride as mere simulation. Simulation of success in the public realm is far more empowering to students than completely abandoning all notions of personal power in the face of governmental hegemony by teaching students that “nothing they can do in a contest debate can ever make any difference in public policy.” Contest debating is well suited to rewarding public activism if it stops accepting as an article of faith that personal agency is somehow undermined by the so-called role playing in debate. Debate is role-playing whether we imagine government action or imagine individual action. Imagining myself starting a socialist revolution in America is no less of a fantasy than imagining myself making a difference on Capitol Hill. Furthermore, both fantasies influenced my personal and political development virtually ensuring a life of active, pro-social, political participation. Neither fantasy reduced the likelihood that I would spend my life trying to make the difference I imagined. One fantasy actually does make a greater difference: the one that speaks the language of political power. The other fantasy disables action by making one a laughingstock to those who wield the language of power. Fantasy motivates and role-playing trains through visualization. Until we can imagine it, we cannot really do it. Role-playing without question teaches students to be comfortable with the language of power, and that language paves the way for genuine and effective political activism. Debates over the relative efficacy of political strategies for pro-social change must confront governmental power at some point. There is a fallacy in arguing that movements represent a better political strategy than voting and person-to-person advocacy. Sure, a full-scale movement would be better than the limited voice I have as a participating citizen going from door to door in a campaign, but so would full-scale government action. Unfortunately, the gap between my individual decision to pursue movement politics and the emergence of a full-scale movement is at least as great as the gap between my vote and democratic change. They both represent utopian fiat. Invocation of Mitchell to support utopian movement fiat is simply not supported by his work, and too often, such invocation discourages the concrete actions he argues for in favor of the personal rejectionism that under girds the political cynicism that is a fundamental cause of voter and participatory abstention in America today.

#### Critical movements must be strategically oriented legalistic demands against the state to promote real change.

Zizek 07 Slavoj “Resistance is Surrender” London Review of Books November 15th 2007 <http://www.lacan.com/zizsurcrit.htm> JW

One of the clearest lessons of the last few decades is that capitalism is indestructible. Marx compared it to a vampire, and one of the salient points of comparison now appears to be that vampires always rise up again after being stabbed to death. Even Mao's attempt, in the Cultural Revolution, to wipe out the traces of capitalism, ended up in its triumphant return. Today's Left reacts in a wide variety of ways to the hegemony of global capitalism and its political supplement, liberal democracy. It might, for example, accept the hegemony, but continue to fight for reform within its rules (this is Third Way social democracy). Or, it accepts that the hegemony is here to stay, but should nonetheless be resisted from its 'interstices'. Or, it accepts the futility of all struggle, since the hegemony is so all-encompassing that nothing can really be done except wait for an outburst of 'divine violence' - a revolutionary version of Heidegger's 'only God can save us.' Or, it recognises the temporary futility of the struggle. In today's triumph of global capitalism, the argument goes, true resistance is not possible, so all we can do till the revolutionary spirit of the global working class is renewed is defend what remains of the welfare state, confronting those in power with demands we know they cannot fulfil, and otherwise withdraw into cultural studies, where one can quietly pursue the work of criticism. Or, it emphasises the fact that the problem is a more fundamental one, that global capitalism is ultimately an effect of the underlying principles of technology or 'instrumental reason'. Or, it posits that one can undermine global capitalism and state power, not by directly attacking them, but by refocusing the field of struggle on everyday practices, where one can 'build a new world'; in this way, the foundations of the power of capital and the state will be gradually undermined, and, at some point, the state will collapse (the exemplar of this approach is the Zapatista movement). Or, it takes the 'postmodern' route, shifting the accent from anti-capitalist struggle to the multiple forms of politico-ideological struggle for hegemony, emphasising the importance of discursive re-articulation. Or, it wagers that one can repeat at the postmodern level the classical Marxist gesture of enacting the 'determinate negation' of capitalism: with today's rise of 'cognitive work', the contradiction between social production and capitalist relations has become starker than ever, rendering possible for the first time 'absolute democracy' (this would be Hardt and Negri's position). These positions are not presented as a way of avoiding some 'true' radical Left politics - what they are trying to get around is, indeed, the lack of such a position. This defeat of the Left is not the whole story of the last thirty years, however. There is another, no less surprising, lesson to be learned from the Chinese Communists' presiding over arguably the most explosive development of capitalism in history, and from the growth of West European Third Way social democracy. It is, in short: we can do it better. In the UK, the Thatcher revolution was, at the time, chaotic and impulsive, marked by unpredictable contingencies. It was Tony Blair who was able to institutionalise it, or, in Hegel's terms, to raise (what first appeared as) a contingency, a historical accident, into a necessity. Thatcher wasn't a Thatcherite, she was merely herself; it was Blair (more than Major) who truly gave form to Thatcherism. The response of some critics on the postmodern Left to this predicament is to call for a new politics of resistance. Those who still insist on fighting state power, let alone seizing it, are accused of remaining stuck within the 'old paradigm': the task today, their critics say, is to resist state power by withdrawing from its terrain and creating new spaces outside its control. This is, of course, the obverse of accepting the triumph of capitalism. The politics of resistance is nothing but the moralising supplement to a Third Way Left. Simon Critchley's recent book, Infinitely Demanding, is an almost perfect embodiment of this position. For Critchley, the liberal-democratic state is here to stay. Attempts to abolish the state failed miserably; consequently, the new politics has to be located at a distance from it: anti-war movements, ecological organisations, groups protesting against racist or sexist abuses, and other forms of local self-organisation. It must be a politics of resistance to the state, of bombarding the state with impossible demands, of denouncing the limitations of state mechanisms. The main argument for conducting the politics of resistance at a distance from the state hinges on the ethical dimension of the 'infinitely demanding' call for justice: no state can heed this call, since its ultimate goal is the 'real-political' one of ensuring its own reproduction (its economic growth, public safety, etc). 'Of course,' Critchley writes, history is habitually written by the people with the guns and sticks and one cannot expect to defeat them with mocking satire and feather dusters. Yet, as the history of ultra-leftist active nihilism eloquently shows, one is lost the moment one picks up the guns and sticks. Anarchic political resistance should not seek to mimic and mirror the archic violent sovereignty it opposes. So what should, say, the US Democrats do? Stop competing for state power and withdraw to the interstices of the state, leaving state power to the Republicans and start a campaign of anarchic resistance to it? And what would Critchley do if he were facing an adversary like Hitler? Surely in such a case one should 'mimic and mirror the archic violent sovereignty' one opposes? Shouldn't the Left draw a distinction between the circumstances in which one would resort to violence in confronting the state, and those in which all one can and should do is use 'mocking satire and feather dusters'? The ambiguity of Critchley's position resides in a strange non sequitur: if the state is here to stay, if it is impossible to abolish it (or capitalism), why retreat from it? Why not act with(in) the state? Why not accept the basic premise of the Third Way? Why limit oneself to a politics which, as Critchley puts it, 'calls the state into question and calls the established order to account, not in order to do away with the state, desirable though that might well be in some utopian sense, but in order to better it or attenuate its malicious effect'? These words simply demonstrate that today's liberal-democratic state and the dream of an 'infinitely demanding' anarchic politics exist in a relationship of mutual parasitism: anarchic agents do the ethical thinking, and the state does the work of running and regulating society. Critchley's anarchic ethico-political agent acts like a superego, comfortably bombarding the state with demands; and the more the state tries to satisfy these demands, the more guilty it is seen to be. In compliance with this logic, the anarchic agents focus their protest not on open dictatorships, but on the hypocrisy of liberal democracies, who are accused of betraying their own professed principles. The big demonstrations in London and Washington against the US attack on Iraq a few years ago offer an exemplary case of this strange symbiotic relationship between power and resistance. Their paradoxical outcome was that both sides were satisfied. The protesters saved their beautiful souls: they made it clear that they don't agree with the government's policy on Iraq. Those in power calmly accepted it, even profited from it: not only did the protests in no way prevent the already-made decision to attack Iraq; they also served to legitimise it. Thus George Bush's reaction to mass demonstrations protesting his visit to London, in effect: 'You see, this is what we are fighting for, so that what people are doing here - protesting against their government policy - will be possible also in Iraq!' It is striking that the course on which Hugo Chávez has embarked since 2006 is the exact opposite of the one chosen by the postmodern Left: far from resisting state power, he grabbed it (first by an attempted coup, then democratically), ruthlessly using the Venezuelan state apparatuses to promote his goals. Furthermore, he is militarising the barrios, and organising the training of armed units there. And, the ultimate scare: now that he is feeling the economic effects of capital's 'resistance' to his rule (temporary shortages of some goods in the state-subsidised supermarkets), he has announced plans to consolidate the 24 parties that support him into a single party. Even some of his allies are sceptical about this move: will it come at the expense of the popular movements that have given the Venezuelan revolution its élan? However, this choice, though risky, should be fully endorsed: the task is to make the new party function not as a typical state socialist (or Peronist) party, but as a vehicle for the mobilisation of new forms of politics (like the grass roots slum committees). What should we say to someone like Chávez? 'No, do not grab state power, just withdraw, leave the state and the current situation in place'? Chávez is often dismissed as a clown - but wouldn't such a withdrawal just reduce him to a version of Subcomandante Marcos, whom many Mexican leftists now refer to as 'Subcomediante Marcos'? Today, it is the great capitalists - Bill Gates, corporate polluters, fox hunters - who 'resist' the state. The lesson here is that the truly subversive thing is not to insist on 'infinite' demands we know those in power cannot fulfil. Since they know that we know it, such an 'infinitely demanding' attitude presents no problem for those in power: 'So wonderful that, with your critical demands, you remind us what kind of world we would all like to live in. Unfortunately, we live in the real world, where we have to make do with what is possible.' The thing to do is, on the contrary, to bombard those in power with strategically well-selected, precise, finite demands, which can't be met with the same excuse.

#### Critique is useless without a concrete policy option that solves for your harms.

Bryant 12 Levi Bryant (Professor of Philosophy at Collin College) “A Critique of the Academic Left” 2012 <https://larvalsubjects.wordpress.com/2012/11/11/underpants-gnomes-a-critique-of-the-academic-left/> JW

Unfortunately, the academic left falls prey to its own form of abstraction. It’s good at carrying out critiques that denounce various social formations, yet very poor at proposing any sort of realistic constructions of alternatives. This because it thinks abstractly in its own way, ignor[es]ing how networks, assemblages, structures, or regimes of attraction would have to be remade to create a workable alternative. Here I’m reminded by the “underpants gnomes” depicted in South Park: The underpants gnomes have a plan for achieving profit that goes like this: Phase 1: Collect Underpants Phase 2: ? Phase 3: Profit! They even have a catchy song to go with their work: Well this is sadly how it often is with the academic left. Our plan seems to be as follows: Phase 1: Ultra-Radical Critique Phase 2: ? Phase 3: Revolution and complete social transformation! Our problem is that we seem perpetually stuck at phase 1 without ever explaining what is to be done at phase 2. Often the critiques articulated at phase 1 are right, but there are nonetheless all sorts of problems with those critiques nonetheless. In order to reach phase 3, we have to produce new collectives. In order for new collectives to be produced, people need to be able to hear and understand the critiques developed at phase 1. Yet this is where everything begins to fall apart. Even though these critiques are often right, we express [critiques] them in ways that only an academic with a PhD in critical theory and post-structural theory can understand. How exactly is Adorno to produce an effect in the world if only PhD’s in the humanities can understand him? Who are these things for? We seem to always ignore these things and then look down our noses with disdain at the Naomi Kleins and David Graebers of the world. To make matters worse, we publish our work in expensive academic journals that only universities can afford, with presses that don’t have a wide distribution, and give our talks at expensive hotels at academic conferences attended only by other academics. Again, who are these things for? Is it an accident that so many activists look away from these things with contempt, thinking their more about an academic industry and tenure, than producing change in the world? If a tree falls in a forest and no one is there to hear it, it doesn’t make a sound! Seriously dudes and dudettes, what are you doing? But finally, and worst of all, us Marxists and anarchists all too often act like assholes. We denounce others, we condemn them, we berate them for not engaging with the questions we want to engage with, and we vilify them when they don’t embrace every bit of the doxa that we endorse. We are every bit as off-putting and unpleasant as the fundamentalist minister or the priest of the inquisition (have people yet understood that Deleuze and Guattari’s Anti-Oedipus was a critique of the French communist party system and the Stalinist party system, and the horrific passions that arise out of parties and identifications in general?). This type of “revolutionary” is the greatest friend of the reactionary and capitalist because they do more to drive people into the embrace of reigning ideology than to undermine reigning ideology. These are the people that keep Rush Limbaugh in business. Well done! But this isn’t where our most serious shortcomings lie. Our most serious shortcomings are to be found at phase 2. We almost never make concrete proposals for how things ought to be restructured, for what new material infrastructures and semiotic fields need to be produced, and when we do, our critique-intoxicated cynics and skeptics immediately jump in with an analysis of all the ways in which these things contain dirty secrets, ugly motives, and are doomed to fail. How, I wonder, are we to do anything at all when we have no concrete proposals? We live on a planet of 6 billion people. These 6 billion people are dependent on a certain network of production and distribution to meet the needs of their consumption. That network of production and distribution does involve the extraction of resources, the production of food, the maintenance of paths of transit and communication, the disposal of waste, the building of shelters, the distribution of medicines, etc., etc., etc.

### Plan Text

#### Resolved: the United States federal government will ban private ownership of handguns through passive enforcement.

Jacobs 04 James (Chief Justice Warren E. Burger Professor of Constitutional Law and the Courts Director, Center for Research in Crime and Justice New York University School of Law) Can Gun Control Work? “Prohibition and Disarmament” 2004 Oxford Scholarship Online JW

These potential problems suggest that passive enforcement might be a better alternative. BATF agents might make no special effort to identify and arrest handgun possessors. They could simply make arrests when handguns come to light in the course of investigations of other crimes. Of course, that is not much different than the way federal and state felon-inpossession laws are currently enforced.

### Adv 1

#### US-Latin American relations are waning now. Decisive federal action to lessen gun ownership creates the perception of cooperation on instability which fixes relations.

Sweig 13 Julia E. Sweig (Nelson and David Rockefeller Senior Fellow for Latin America Studies and Director for Latin America Studies) “A Strategy to Reduce Gun Trafficking and Violence in the Americas” Council on Foreign Relations, Policy Innovation Memorandum No. 36 July 2013 <http://www.cfr.org/arms-industries-and-trade/strategy-reduce-gun-trafficking-violence-americas/p31155> JW

The flow of high-powered weaponry from the United States to Latin America and the Caribbean exacerbates soaring rates of gun-related violence in the region and undermines U.S. influence in the Western Hemisphere. Though the Senate rejected measures to expand background checks on firearms sales, reinstate a federal assault-weapons ban, and make straw purchasing a federal crime, the Obama administration can still take executive action to reduce the availability and trafficking of assault weapons and ammunition in the Americas. The Problem With the launch of the Merida Initiative in 2007, the U.S. and Mexican governments agreed to a regional security framework guided by the principle of shared responsibility. Among its domestic obligations, the United States committed to intensify its efforts to combat the illegal trafficking of weapons and ammunition to Mexico and elsewhere in the Americas. Six years later, little has changed: the U.S. civilian firearms market continues to supply the region's transnational criminal networks with high-powered weaponry that is purchased with limited oversight, especially from unlicensed individuals at gun shows, flea markets, pawn shops, and on the Internet. Lax U.S. gun laws enable straw purchasers, including those under investigation in Operation Fast and Furious, to legally procure thousands of AK-47 and AR-15 variants every year and traffic them across the border to sell them illegally to criminal factions. U.S. government data highlights the problem. The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives' (ATF) Web-based firearm trace request and analysis system, eTrace, enables law enforcement officials to collaborate with ATF to track the path of recovered weapons from the manufacturer or importer though the distribution chain to the first retail purchase. Over 70 percent of the ninety-nine thousand weapons recovered by Mexican law enforcement since 2007 were traced to U.S. manufacturers and importers. Likewise, 2011 eTrace data for the Caribbean indicates that over 90 percent of the weapons recovered and traced in the Bahamas and over 80 percent of those in Jamaica came from the United States. The ATF has not released data for Central America, but the numbers are likely similar. The UN Office on Drugs and Crime reports that easy access to firearms is a major factor influencing homicide trends in Latin America and the Caribbean; the gun-related homicide rate in Latin America exceeded the global average in 2010 by more than 30 percent. The World Bank estimates that crime and violence cost Central America nearly 8 percent of its GDP when accounting for the costs of law enforcement, security, and health care. The U.S. government has empowered law enforcement in the region to recover and investigate the source of weapons used by criminal factions. In December 2009, the ATF introduced the Spanish version of eTrace. Since 2012, the State Department has funded the Organization of American States' (OAS) program to provide firearm-marking equipment and training to law enforcement in twenty-five countries. Yet, these efforts notwithstanding, Mexican authorities intercepted only 12.7 percent of the roughly 250,000 guns smuggled into Mexico between 2010 and 2012, while the ATF intercepted no more than 2 percent. In effect, the United States undermines its own efforts at preventing arms trafficking with its unwillingness to strengthen oversight of the firearms industry and lukewarm support for multilateral agreements. The United States is one of three countries that have not ratified the Inter-American Convention Against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Ammunition, Explosives, and Other Related Materials (CIFTA). In addition to requiring parties to criminalize the illegal manufacture, import, or export of high-powered weapons, the treaty encourages information exchange and cooperation on initiatives including the marking and tracing of weapons and the identification of criminal transit routes. President Bill Clinton signed CIFTA in 1997 and submitted it for ratification to the Senate, where it has lingered for over a decade. Likewise, although the United States voted in favor of the United Nations' Arms Trade Treaty in April 2013, it has yet to sign or ratify the treaty. Given the political complexity of legislative action to reduce arms trafficking, Latin American governments have moved to disarm criminal networks by tightening their own gun codes: Mexico prohibits the sale of handguns with calibers greater than .38 and Colombia bans civilians from carrying firearms in Medellin and Bogota. Brazil, Mexico, and El Salvador have implemented gun buyback programs. At the 2012 Summit of the Americas, heads of state demanded a new approach to the failed war on drugs, including greater efforts to disarm criminal networks. U.S. allies have repeatedly urged the United States to reinstate the federal assault-weapons ban and take action against weapons trafficking. Their patience—and the United States' credibility as a responsible partner—is waning. U.S. action will strengthen those regional heads of state who want to work with the United States and who also regard lax U.S. gun laws as fueling violence and anti-Americanism among their own publics. Across the board, Latin American governments are turning toward the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States and the Union of South American Nations, which pointedly exclude the United States, to handle regional political and security dilemmas. Stronger action to regulate the southward flow of weapons represents an opportunity for the Obama administration to enhance U.S. relevance in the region, especially at the early stages of new regional institutions and security protocols. Recommendations In the absence of major legislative action, the Obama administration should pursue the following executive and diplomatic actions—consistent with the Second Amendment—to reduce the trafficking of firearms that contribute to crime and violence across the Americas: Expand nationwide the state-level multiple-sale reporting requirement for assault weapons. In 2011, the Obama administration adopted a federal rule that requires gun dealers in California, Texas, Arizona, and New Mexico to report sales of more than two semiautomatic rifles to the same person within a five-day period. Unintentionally, the rule shifted gun sales to states not covered by the requirement, prompting the need for improved oversight of all suspicious semiautomatic firearm sales. Incorporate strategies to reduce existing stocks of illegal firearms into U.S.-Brazil dialogue on defense and security. As home to the two largest firearms industries in the hemisphere, the United States and Brazil have a mutual interest in incorporating this topic into their ongoing bilateral policy dialogues. For example, sharing best practices regarding gun buyback programs in border regions on the U.S.-Mexican and Brazilian-Bolivian borders will build mutual confidence between the two largest Hemispheric powers. Exclude firearms and ammunition products from the Export Control Reform Initiative. As currently crafted, President Barack Obama's reform initiative may make it easier for U.S. manufacturers to export military-style weapons to allies. Liberalizing export restrictions on firearms poses a serious security risk to the Americas; potential reexport of firearms without U.S. oversight could jeopardize local law enforcement efforts to keep weapons from criminal groups and rogue security forces in the region. Apply the "sporting test" standards of the 1968 Gun Control Act. This provision prohibits the import of weapons not "suitable or readily adaptable for sporting purposes," including but not limited to military-style firearms. Throughout the 1990s, under Presidents George H.W. Bush and Bill Clinton, the ATF adhered to the sporting test guidelines, preventing thousands of assault weapons from entering the U.S. firearms market. Enforcement of the test lapsed under President George W. Bush and has not been reestablished under President Obama. Continue to support federal, state, and local initiatives to improve regulation of the U.S. civilian firearms market. As grassroots organizations prepare their long-term legislative strategies, the White House should back state and local legislation, based on reforms in Maryland and Connecticut, which bans the sale of assault rifles and high-capacity magazines, broadens existing background check requirements for firearm purchases, and modernizes gun-owner registries by requiring, among others, that buyers submit their fingerprints when applying for a gun license. While piecemeal regulation of the U.S. civilian firearms market does not represent a comprehensive solution, passage of state and local measures, including gun buyback programs, will reduce the number of weapons in circulation and available for smuggling and generate momentum for a broader federal approach over the long run. Conclusion Strengthening U.S. gun laws will not eliminate gun violence in Latin America, where weak judiciaries and police forces, the proliferation of gangs and black markets, and deep inequality exacerbate violent conflict. Nonetheless, lax U.S. gun regulations do enable international trafficking. While the effects of tighter regulation will not be felt overnight, such steps will offset widespread regional views that the United States remains indifferent to its own role in exacerbating one of Latin America's most significant challenges. Although recent federal gun control measures have run aground on congressional opposition, the Obama administration retains considerable leeway in the foreign policy arena, where concerted action can help U.S. allies in Latin America make the case to their constituents and to other skeptical governments that the United States can be a legitimate partner in combating transnational crime. At a juncture in U.S.-Latin American relations that again features both tension and opportunity, these actions will demonstrate that the United States is prepared, if imperfectly, to fulfill its shared responsibility for regional security and enhance American standing and positive influence in Latin America.

#### US-LAC relations are key to combatting climate change and preventing nuclear proliferation.

Brookings Institution 08 “Rethinking U.S.—Latin American Relations: A Hemispheric Partnership for a Turbulent World” Report of the Partnership for the Americas Commission, 2008 <http://www.brookings.edu/~/media/Research/Files/Reports/2008/11/24-latin-america-partnership/1124_latin_america_partnership.PDF> JW

Developments in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) have a very significant impact on the daily lives of those who live in the United States. Yet because of a lack of trust, an inability to undertake stable commitments by some countries, and different U.S. priorities, the United States and Latin America have rarely developed a genuine and sustained partnership to address regional—let alone global—challenges. If a hemispheric partnership remains elusive, the costs to the United States and its neighbors will be high, in terms of both growing risks and missed opportunities. Without a partnership, the risk that criminal networks pose to the region’s people and institutions will continue to grow. Peaceful nuclear technology may be adopted more widely, but without proper regional safeguards, the risks of nuclear proliferation will increase. Adaptation to climate change will take place through isolated, improvised measures by individual countries, rather than through more effective efforts based on mutual learning and coordination. Illegal immigration to the United States will continue unabated and unregulated, adding to an ever-larger underclass that lives and works at the margins of the law. Finally, the countries around the hemisphere, including the United States, will lose valuable opportunities to tap new markets, make new investments, and access valuable resources. Today, several changes in the region have made a hemispheric partnership both possible and necessary. The key challenges faced by the United States and the hemisphere’s other countries—such as securing sustainable energy supplies, combating and adapting to climate change, and combating organized crime and drug trafficking—have become so complex and deeply transnational that they cannot be managed or overcome by any single country. At the same time, the LAC countries are diversifying their international economic and political relations, making them less reliant on the United States. Finally, the LAC countries are better positioned than before to act as reliable partners.

#### Warming is real, anthropogenic, and causes extinction.

Jamail 15 Dahr “Mass Extinction: It's the End of the World as We Know It” July 6 2015 Truthout <http://www.truth-out.org/news/item/31661-mass-extinction-it-s-the-end-of-the-world-as-we-know-it> JW

Guy McPherson is a professor emeritus of evolutionary biology, natural resources and ecology at the University of Arizona, and has been a climate change expert for 30 years. He has also become a controversial figure, due to the fact that he does not shy away from talking about the possibility of near-term human extinction. While McPherson's perspective might sound like the stuff of science fiction, there is historical precedent for his predictions. Fifty-five million years ago, a 5-degree Celsius rise in average global temperatures seems to have occurred in just 13 years, according to a study published in the October 2013 issue of the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences. A report in the August 2013 issue of Science revealed that in the near term, earth's climate will change 10 times faster than during any other moment in the last 65 million years. McPherson fears that we are well along in the process of causing our own extinction. Prior to that, the Permian mass extinction that occurred 250 million years ago, also known as the "Great Dying," was triggered by a massive lava flow in an area of Siberia that led to an increase in global temperatures of 6 degrees Celsius. That, in turn, caused the melting of frozen methane deposits under the seas. Released into the atmosphere, those gases caused temperatures to skyrocket further. All of this occurred over a period of approximately 80,000 years. The change in climate is thought to be the key to what caused the extinction of most species on the planet. In that extinction episode, it is estimated that 95 percent of all species were wiped out. Today's current scientific and observable evidence strongly suggests we are in the midst of the same process - only this time it is anthropogenic, and happening exponentially faster than even the Permian mass extinction did. In fact, a recently published study in Science Advances states, unequivocally, that the planet has officially entered its sixth mass extinction event. The study shows that species are already being killed off at rates much faster than they were during the other five extinction events, and warns ominously that humans could very likely be among the first wave of species to go extinct. So if some feel that McPherson's thinking is extreme, when the myriad scientific reports he cites to back his claims are looked at squarely and the dots are connected, the perceived extremism begins to dissolve into a possible, or even likely, reality. The idea of possible human extinction, coming not just from McPherson but a growing number of scientists (as well as the aforementioned recently published report in Science), is now beginning to occasionally find its way into mainstream consciousness. "A Child Born Today May Live to See Humanity's End, Unless ..." reads a recent blog post title from Reuters. It reads: Humans will be extinct in 100 years because the planet will be uninhabitable, according to Australian microbiologist Frank Fenner, one of the leaders of the effort to eradicate smallpox in the 1970s. He blames overcrowding, denuded resources and climate change. Fenner's prediction is not a sure bet, but he is correct that there is no way emissions reductions will be enough to save us from our trend toward doom. And there doesn't seem to be any big global rush to reduce emissions, anyway. McPherson, who maintains the blog "Nature Bats Last," told Truthout, "We've never been here as a species and the implications are truly dire and profound for our species and the rest of the living planet." Truthout first interviewed McPherson in early 2014, at which time he had identified 24 self-reinforcing positive feedback loops triggered by human-caused climate disruption. Today that number has grown to more than 50, and continues to increase. A self-reinforcing positive feedback loop is akin to a "vicious circle": It accelerates the impacts of anthropogenic climate disruption (ACD). An example would be methane releases in the Arctic. Massive amounts of methane [is] are currently locked in the permafrost, which is now melting rapidly. As the permafrost melts, methane - a greenhouse gas 100 times more potent than carbon dioxide on a short timescale - is released into the atmosphere, warming it further, which in turn causes more permafrost to melt, and so on. As soon as this summer, we are likely to begin seeing periods of an ice-free Arctic. (Those periods will arrive by the summer of 2016 at the latest, according to a Naval Postgraduate School report.) Once the summer ice begins melting away completely, even for short periods, methane releases will worsen dramatically. Is it possible that, on top of the vast quantities of carbon dioxide from fossil fuels that continue to enter the atmosphere in record amounts yearly, an increased release of methane could signal the beginning of the sort of process that led to the Great Dying? McPherson, like the scientists involved in the recent study that confirms the arrival of the sixth great extinction, fears that the situation is already so serious and so many self-reinforcing feedback loops are already in play that we are well along in the process of causing our own extinction. Furthermore, McPherson remains convinced that it could happen far more quickly than generally believed possible - in the course of just the next few decades, or even sooner.

#### Prolif causes extinction; no deterrence.

Miller 02 James D. (Professor of economics, Smith College) NATIONAL REVIEW, January 23, 2002, http://www.nationalreview.com/comment/comment-miller012302.shtml, Accessed 7-31-09

The U.S. should use whatever means necessary to stop our enemies from gaining the ability to kill millions of us. We should demand that countries like Iraq, Iran, Libya, and North Korea make no attempt to acquire weapons of mass destruction. We should further insist on the right to make surprise inspections of these countries to insure that they are complying with our proliferation policy. What if these nations refuse our demands? If they refuse we should destroy their industrial capacity and capture their leaders. True, the world's cultural elites would be shocked and appalled if we took preventive military action against countries that are currently doing us no harm. What is truly shocking, however, is that America is doing almost nothing while countries that have expressed hatred for us are building weapons of mass destruction. France and Britain allowed Nazi Germany's military power to grow until Hitler was strong enough to take Paris. America seems to be doing little while many of our foes acquire the strength to destroy U.S. cities. **We can't rely upon deterrence** to prevent an atomic powered dictator from striking at us. Remember, the Nazi's killed millions of Jews even though the Holocaust took resources away from their war effort. As September 11th also shows, **there exist evil [people]** men in the world **who would gladly sacrifice all other goals** for the opportunity **to commit mass murder.** The U.S. should take not even the slightest unnecessary chance that some dictator, perhaps a dying Saddam Hussein, would be willing to give up his life for the opportunity to hit America with nuclear missiles. **Once a dictator has** the ability to hit a U.S., or perhaps even a European city, with **atomic weapons it will be too late** for America **to pressure [them] him to give up** his weapons. **His [their] ability to hurt us will** effectively **put [them] him beyond** our **military reach.** Our conventional forces might even be made impotent by a nuclear-armed foe. Had Iraq possessed atomic weapons, for example, we would probably have been unwilling to expel them from Kuwait. What about the rights of those countries I have proposed threatening? America should not even pretend to care about the rights of dictators. In the 21st century the only leaders whom we should recognize as legitimate are those who were democratically elected. The U.S. should reinterpret international law to give no rights to tyrants, not even the right to exist. We should have an ethically based foreign policy towards democratic countries. With dictatorships, however, we should be entirely Machiavellian; we should deal with them based upon what is in our own best interests. It's obviously in our self-interest to prevent as many dictators as possible from acquiring the means to destroy us. We shouldn't demand that China abandon her nuclear weapons. This is not because China has proved herself worthy to have the means of mass annihilation, but rather because her existing stockpile of atomic missiles would make it too costly for us to threaten China. It's too late to stop the Chinese from gaining the ability to decimate us, but for the next ten years or so it is not too late to stop some of our other rivals. If it's politically impossible for America to use military force against currently non-hostile dictators then we should use trade sanctions to punish nations who don't agree to our proliferation policy. Normal trade sanctions, however, do not provide the punishing power necessary to induce dictators to abandon their arms. If we simply don't trade with a nation other countries will sell them the goods that we used to provide. To make trade sanctions an effective weapon the U.S. needs to deploy secondary boycotts. America should create a treaty, the signatories of which would agree to: • only trade with countries which have signed the treaty, and • not trade with any country which violates our policy on weapons proliferation. Believe that if only the U.S. and, say, Germany initially signed this treaty then nearly every other country would be forced to do so. For example, if France did not sign, they would be unable to trade with the U.S. or Germany. This would obviously be intolerable to France. Once the U.S., Germany and France adopted the treaty every European nation would have to sign or face a total economic collapse. The more countries which sign the treaty, the greater the pressure on other countries to sign. Once most every country has signed, any country which violated America's policy on weapons proliferation would face almost a complete economic boycott. Under this approach, the U.S. and Germany alone could use our economic power to dictate the enforcement mechanism of a treaty designed to protect against Armageddon. **Even the short-term survival of humanity is in doubt. The greatest threat of extinction surely comes from the prolif**eration of weapons of mass destruction. America should refocus her foreign policy to prioritize protecting us all from atomic, biological, and chemical weapons.

#### Nuclear war causes mass death, food insecurity, disease, race wars, and possibly extinction.

Germanos 13 Andrea (senior editor and a staff writer at Common Dreams) “Nuclear War Could Mean 'Extinction of the Human Race'” Common Dreams December 10th 2013 <http://www.commondreams.org/news/2013/12/10/nuclear-war-could-mean-extinction-human-race> JW

A war using even a small percentage of the world's nuclear weapons threatens the lives of two billion people, a new report warns. The findings in the report issued by International Physicians for Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW) and Physicians for Social Responsibility (PSR) are based on studies by climate scientists that show how nuclear war would alter the climate and agriculture, thereby threatening one quarter of the world's population with famine. Nuclear Famine: Two Billion People at Risk? offers an updated edition to the groups' April of 2012 report, which the groups say "may have seriously underestimated the consequences of a limited nuclear war." "A nuclear war using only a fraction of existing arsenals would produce massive casualties on a global scale—far more than we had previously believed," Dr. Ira Helfand, the report’s author and IPPNW co-president, said in a statement. As their previous report showed, years after even a limited nuclear war, production of corn in the U.S. and China's middle season rice production would severely decline, and fears over dwindling food supplies would lead to hoarding and increases in food prices, creating further food insecurity for those already reliant on food imports. The updated report adds that Chinese winter wheat production would plummet if such a war broke out. Based on information from new studies combining reductions in wheat, corn and rice, this new edition doubles the number of people they expect to be threatened by nuclear-war induced famine to over two billion. "The prospect of a decade of widespread hunger and intense social and economic instability in the world’s largest country has immense implications for the entire global community, as does the possibility that the huge declines in Chinese wheat production will be matched by similar declines in other wheat producing countries," Helfand stated. The crops would be impacted, the report explains, citing previous studies, because of the black carbon particles that would be released, causing widespread changes like cooling temperatures, decreased precipitation and decline in solar radiation. In this scenario of famine, epidemics of infectious diseases would be likely, the report states, and could lead to armed conflict. From the report: Within nations where famine is widespread, there would almost certainly be food riots, and competition for limited food resources might well exacerbate ethnic and regional animosities. Among nations, armed conflict would be a very real possibility as states dependent on imports attempted to maintain access to food supplies. While a limited nuclear war would bring dire circumstances, the impacts if the world's biggest nuclear arms holders were involved would be even worse. "With a large war between the United States and Russia, we are talking about the possible —not certain, but possible—extinction of the human race," Helfand told Agence-France Presse. “In order to eliminate this threat, we must eliminate nuclear weapons," Helfand stated. (Photo: MAPWcommunications/cc/flickr) "In this kind of war, biologically there are going to be people surviving somewhere on the planet but the chaos that would result from this will dwarf anything we've ever seen," Helfand told the news agency. As Helfand writes, the data cited in the report "raises a giant red flag about the threat to humanity posed." Yet, as Dr. Peter Wilk, former national executive director of PSR writes in an op-ed today, the "threat is of our own creation." As a joint statement by 124 states delivered to the United Nations General Assembly in October stated: "It is in the interest of the very survival of humanity that nuclear weapons are never used again, under any circumstances." "Countries around the world—those who are nuclear-armed and those who are not—must work together to eliminate the threat and consequences of nuclear war," Helfand said. “In order to eliminate this threat, we must eliminate nuclear weapons.”

### Adv 2

#### Consensus of studies proves handgun ownership increases risk of impulsive suicide- talking about suicide should be at the forefront of gun control debates.

DeFilippis and Hughes 14 Evan Defilippis (graduated from the University of Oklahoma with a triple degree in Economics, Political Science, and Psychology. He was the University of Oklahoma's valedictorian in 2012, he is one of the nation's few Harry S. Truman Scholars based on his commitment to public service, and is a David L. Boren Critical Languages scholar, fluent in Swahili, and dedicated to a career in African development. He worked on multiple poverty-reduction projects in Nairobi, Kenya, doing big data analysis for Innovations for Poverty Action. He will be attending Princeton's Woodrow Wilson School in the Fall.) and Devin Hughes (senior at the University of Oklahoma with degrees in Finance and Risk Management. He is a National Merit Scholar and Oklahoma Chess Champion, with numerous academic publications) “MORE GUNS, MORE SUICIDES – THE VICIOUS RELATIONSHIP” Armed With Reason March 29th 2014 <http://www.armedwithreason.com/more-guns-more-suicides-the-vicious-relationship/> JW

The Impulsiveness of Suicide An impulsive suicide is one for which there is very little preparation prior the attempt. A 2001 study, using the Beck’s Suicidal Intent Scale, examined 478 individuals who attempted suicide, and found that more than half (55 percent) of attempts could be classified as “impulsive,” while only about one-sixth (17 percent) of attempts were premeditated. One study found that 40 percent of suicide attempt survivors contemplated suicide for less than five minutes before the attempt. Another study examined self-inflicted gunshot wounds that would have been fatal in the absence of emergency treatment. The researchers found that none of the 30 individuals who attempted suicide had written a note, and more than half of them said that the thought to commit suicide occurred within 24 hours of the attempt. In a two-year follow up, none of the 30 had attempted suicide again, and the overwhelming sentiment among the group was that they were happy to be alive. The data is clear, then, that there’s nothing “inevitable” about a suicide, nothing predictable about impulsiveness. To turn a blind eye to suicide based on the pretense that they’ll “just try again” demonstrates a profound ignorance of the psychology of suicide, and a callous unwillingness to consider the struggle of another human being. The Data The latest available data on suicide rates, published by the Centers for Disease Control, shows that 38 [thousand],364 suicides occurred in the United States in 2010 — an average of 105 each day. This made suicide the tenth leading cause of death for all age groups. More people kill themselves with guns than all other methods combined. Males are atparticularly high risk of firearm suicide, given that guns account for 56 percent of male suicides, but 32 percent of female suicides. Firearms tend to be the weapon of choice for a suicide given their lethality factor — for example, one study from Dallas found that, of those attempting suicide with a gun, 76 percent died. Dr. David Hemenway of the Harvard School of Public Health summarized 10 studies in the previous 20 years examining the relationship between gun ownership and suicide and found that “all [of them] find that firearms in the home are associated with substantially and significantly higher rates of suicide.” Furthermore, every single case control study done in the United States has found the presence of a firearm is a strong risk factor for suicide. (That’s 24 separate studies). The most recent case-control study published in the American Journal of Epidemiology found at least five reasons to believe that firearm ownership is drivingthe suicide rate: The association between firearm availability and suicide is robust to adjustments for measures of psychopathology and aggregate-level measures of suicidality such as depression, mental illness, alcoholism, poverty, unemployment, and drug abuse. The risk of suicide extends beyond just the gun owner to all members of a household, and lasts for years after the firearm has been purchased. The rates of psychiatric illness and suicidal tendencies is similar in households with and without firearms across the United States. Multiple ecological studies have confirmed the results of individual-level studies to show aggregate-level trends in suicide rates. Suicide attempts are not significantly associated with firearm ownership rates. If it were the case that gun owners had stronger suicidal proclivities than non-gun owners we would expect the suicide attempt rate to be positively associated with the firearm ownership rate, but it isn’t. This means that the primary way through which firearms influence the suicide rate is by making each attempt comparatively more lethal than other methods. There is little controversy, then, that firearms exacerbate the suicide rate primarily by increasing the likelihood of a “successful” suicide attempt. Discussion about suicide should be at the forefront of gun control debates, yet it is often a footnote in meaningful policy discussion. This reflects poorly on our nation’s priorities — it shows a cruel insensitivity to the value of human life, and a miscalibrated sense of morality which says that change is only worth having if it benefits me.

#### Even if people substitute other methods there are fewer fatalities.

Miller et al 13 Matthew Miller (Department of Health Policy and Management, Harvard School of Public Health), Catherine Barber, Richard A. White, and Deborah Azrael “Firearms and Suicide in the United States: Is Risk Independent of Underlying Suicidal Behavior?” American Journal of Epidemiology Vol. 178, No. 6 August 23, 2013 <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/23975641> JW

In the United States, where firearms are the method used in more than 50% of all suicides and where roughly 1 in 3 homes contains firearms, even small relative declines in the use of firearms in suicide acts could result in large reductions in the number of suicides, depending on what, if any, method would be substituted for firearms. Consider, for example, the fact that more than 90% of all suicidal acts with firearms are fatal, but suicidal acts with firearms constitute only 5% of all deliberate self-harm episodes. In contrast, fewer than 3% of all suicidal acts with drugs or cutting are fatal but, as a group, such acts constitute approximately 90% of all attempts (33, 34). If even 1 in 10 of the approximately 22,000 persons who attempted suicide with firearms in 2010 (the 19,932 who died and the approximately 2,000 who survived) substituted drugs or cutting, there would have been approximately 1,900 fewer suicide deaths. The potential for substantial reduction in suicide rates is apparent in our comparison of suicides in high– versus low–gun ownership states, where suicide attempt rates are similar, but the rate of suicide is twice as high in high– gun ownership states (with differences in mortality attributable entirely to differences in suicide by firearms), with a net excess of approximately 6,000 suicides in high–gun ownership states over a 2-year period.

#### Gun control empirically solves.

DeFilippis and Hughes 13 Evan Defilippis (graduated from the University of Oklahoma with a triple degree in Economics, Political Science, and Psychology. He was the University of Oklahoma's valedictorian in 2012, he is one of the nation's few Harry S. Truman Scholars based on his commitment to public service, and is a David L. Boren Critical Languages scholar, fluent in Swahili, and dedicated to a career in African development. He worked on multiple poverty-reduction projects in Nairobi, Kenya, doing big data analysis for Innovations for Poverty Action. He will be attending Princeton's Woodrow Wilson School in the Fall.) and Devin Hughes (senior at the University of Oklahoma with degrees in Finance and Risk Management. He is a National Merit Scholar and Oklahoma Chess Champion, with numerous academic publications) “SUICIDES: THE MISSING MOVEMENT- WHY MORE GUNS MEANS MORE SUICIDES” Armed With Reason October 31st 2013 http://www.armedwithreason.com/suicides-the-missing-movement/ JW

Two theoretical caveats problematize the assessment of causation, and should be mentioned before delving into the literature on this topic. First, though a correlation exists between gun ownership per capita and suicide, there may be a self-selection bias. That is, that the types of people who are likely to own guns might be predisposed to suicidal behavior. It could also be the case that some exogenous change in the environment decreased suicide rates and gun ownership concomitantly. A more liberal Congress, for example, might implement both gun regulation policies and suicide prevention policies, producing the illusion of causation between these two variables. Both of these issues have been dealt with through statistical techniques and robust research methods, and the data clearly show that the direction of causality runs from guns to suicides. A 2000 paper by Ludwig and Cook estimated whether declines in suicides over the period 1985-1997 were associated with the passage of the Brady Handgun Violence Prevention Act. The Brady Act required that federally licensed firearms dealers perform a background check and implement a five-day waiting period prior to the sale of a handgun. Eighteen states and the District of Colombia already satisfied Brady requirements, while the other thirty-four states required more stringent procedures. Therefore, researchers observed a natural experiment in which the states that already met Brady requirements were considered a ‘control’ group, and were compared against states in which dealers and law enforcement officials had yet to implement requirements. The study found that the legislation produced a significant reduction in suicide rates among persons aged 55 or older, suggesting that suicidal impulses in older individuals were attenuated by the imposition of the five day waiting period, thereby decreasing the suicide rate. A 2006 paper published by Miller and colleagues at the Harvard School of Public Health explored changes in household firearm ownership in the United States over the period 1981-2002 as it related to a decline in the suicide rate, controlling for age, unemployment, per capita alcohol consumption, and poverty rates. Household gun ownership levels and rates of firearm and non‐firearm suicide mortality: United States, 1981–2002 (Miller et al., 2006). The study found that, for every 10% decline in the household firearm ownership rate, firearm suicides decreased by 4.2%, and total suicides dropped by 2.5%. The decline in suicide rates was highest among children. Examining just households containing both children and firearms, every 10% decline in the percentage of households owning a firearm was related with a 8.3% drop in the suicide rate for individuals between the ages of 0-19. Gun-regulation opponents alleging that this study is merely correlation should have to point out some covariate not accounted for in this analysis that could simultaneously explain why changes in the firearm suicide rate are related to changes in firearm ownership rate, but not related to the non-firearm suicide rate (as might be the case with an exogenous environmental change). Furthermore, the largest study done to assess mental health trends in the United States over the period investigated by the paper found that there was no significant change in suicidal tendencies between 1990-2000. We therefore have evidence that, even after holding psychological tendencies constant, the presence of guns has a dramatic effect on the suicide rate.

#### Legal purchase of handguns causes the harms- only the aff would solve.

Miller et al 13 Matthew Miller (Department of Health Policy and Management, Harvard School of Public Health), Catherine Barber, Richard A. White, and Deborah Azrael “Firearms and Suicide in the United States: Is Risk Independent of Underlying Suicidal Behavior?” American Journal of Epidemiology Vol. 178, No. 6 August 23, 2013 <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/23975641> JW

In addition, the only large US cohort study to examine the firearm-suicide connection found that suicide rates among California residents who purchased handguns from licensed dealers were more than twice as likely to die by suicide as were age- and sex-matched members of the general population, not only immediately after the purchase, but throughout the 6-year study period (21). Here too, the increase in suicide risk was attributable entirely to an excess risk of suicide with firearms (21). The following observations further support the plausibility that the association between firearms and suicide is real: 1) the association is robust to adjustment for measures of psychopathology (7–16), 2) the risk extends beyond the gun owner to all household members (14, 15, 21) and persists for years after firearms are purchased (14, 15, 21), 3) the rates of psychiatric illness and psychosocial distress are similar among households with firearms versus those without firearms (15, 22–25), and 4) ecological studies of the firearm-suicide relationship, which are not subject to recall bias or to reverse causation, yield associations similar to those observed in individual-level studies. Nevertheless, the idea that the availability of firearms plays an important role in determining a person’s suicide risk and a population’s suicide rate continues to meet with skepticism, the most decisive objection being that empirical studies to date have not adequately controlled for the possibility that members of households with firearms are inherently more suicidal than members of households without firearms (26).

#### Most gun deaths are suicides.

Mariani 15 Mike “America’s Biggest Gun Problem is Suicide” Newsweek 9-21-15 <http://www.newsweek.com/2015/10/02/americas-biggest-gun-problem-suicide-374547.html>

These types of catastrophic events can warp our view of what gun violence in the U.S. really looks like. The five deadliest U.S. mass shootings of the 21st century—Virginia Tech, Sandy Hook, Fort Hood, Binghamton and the Washington Navy Yard—resulted in 101 deaths combined. In 2012 (the most recent year for which there is solid data), 32 [thousand],288 people died from gunshot wounds in the United States. According to research published this year in the Annual Review of Public Health, suicides accounted for 64 percent of those deaths. We may have cut down murders in this country over the past two decades, but gun violence has not abated so much as it has evolved into a more insidious form.

#### To clarify, suicide should not always be prevented, nor is it always bad. The 1AC does not say we should minimize suicide, rather that gun suicides are usually compulsive and decisions people would regret. If they really want to, they can find another method after they’ve thought it through.

DeGrazia 14 David (Professor of Philosophy at George Washington University) “The Case for Moderate Gun Control” Kennedy Institute of Ethics Journal Vol. 24, No. 1, 1–25 2014 JW

First, even if we acknowledge a right to commit suicide, from any reasonable perspective the vast majority of suicides must be regarded as tragic. It is not very often that we carefully reflect upon the circumstances of someone who committed a suicide and think, “Yes, suicide was the very best option for that individual.” Sometimes we may, but not very often—especially when the victim of suicide is a child, a mentally ill person, or someone who acts impulsively. Often those who commit [die by] suicide are unaware of, or are momentarily unable to appreciate, the prospects for their lives going better. In a very real sense, then, many people who feel a desire to commit suicide do need protection against themselves. Relatedly, if there is a right to commit suicide, it is plausibly limited to suicidal choices that are genuinely autonomous—choices, that is, that are carried out voluntarily (not primarily driven by external pressures or internal compulsions) with an adequate understanding of one’s realistic options (including those involving available forms of help), and with the psychological capacity to appreciate those options (as opposed to devaluing them due to the distorting effects of depression). An autonomous choice will accord with one’s values and stable preferences. Some suicides committed with the help of a physician meet these criteria; no doubt some suicides committed without such help do as well. But, of course, one doesn’t need a gun to commit suicide autonomously. And the presence of guns makes it more likely that one will kill oneself impulsively and non-autonomously. Thus, a right to commit suicide, plausibly construed, will not undermine the thesis that gun ownership for the purpose of self-defense is, on average, self-defeating.

### Fwk

#### Phenomenal introspection is reliable and proves that util is objectively valid.

Sinhababu Neil (National University of Singapore) “The epistemic argument for hedonism” [http://philpapers.org/archive/SINTEA-3 accessed 2-4-16](http://philpapers.org/archive/SINTEA-3%20accessed%202-4-16) JW

The Odyssey's treatment of these events demonstrates how dramatically ancient Greek moral intuitions differ from ours. It doesn't dwell on the brutality of Telemachus, who killed twelve women for the trivial reasons he states, making them suffer as they die. While gods and men seek vengeance for other great and small offenses in the Odyssey, no one finds this mass murder worth avenging. It's a minor event in the denouement to a happy ending in which Odysseus (who first proposes killing the women) returns home and Telemachus becomes a man. That the[y] Greeks could so easily regard these murders as part of a happy ending for heroes shows how deeply we disagree with them. It's as if we gave them a trolley problem with the 12 women on the side track and no one on the main track, and they judged it permissible for Telemachus to turn the trolley and kill them all. And this isn't some esoteric text of a despised or short-lived sect, but a central literary work of a long-lived and influential culture. Human history offers similarly striking examples of disagreement on a variety of topics. These include sexual morality; the treatment of animals; the treatment of other ethnicities, families, and social classes; the consumption of intoxicating substances; whether and how one may take vengeance; slavery; whether public celebrations are acceptable; and gender roles.12 Moral obligations to commit genocide were accepted not only by some 20th century Germans, but by much of the ancient world, including the culture that gave us the Old Testament. One can only view the human past and much of the present with horror at the depth of human moral error and the harm that has resulted. One might think to explain away much of this disagreement as the result of differing nonmoral beliefs. Those who disagree about nonmoral issues may disagree on the moral rightness of a particular action despite agreeing on the fundamental moral issues. For example, they may agree that healing the sick is right, but disagree about whether a particular medicine will heal or harm. This disagreement about whether to prescribe the medicine won't be fundamentally about morality, and won't support the argument from disagreement. I don't think the moral disagreements listed above are explained by differences in nonmoral belief. This isn't because sexists, racists, and bigots share the nonmoral views of those enlightened by feminism and other egalitarian doctrines – they don't. Rather, their differing views on nonmoral topics often are rationalizations of moral beliefs that fundamentally disagree with ours.13 Those whose fundamental moral judgments include commitments to the authority of men over women, or of one race over another, will easily accept descriptive psychological views that attribute less intelligence or rationality to women or the subjugated race.14 Moral disagreement supposedly arising from moral views in religious texts is similar. Given how rich and many-stranded most religious texts are, interpretive claims about their moral teachings often tell us more about the antecedent moral beliefs of the interpreter than about the text itself. This is why the same texts are interpreted to support so many different moral views. Similar phenomena occur with most moral beliefs. Environmentalists who value a lovely patch of wilderness will easily believe that its destruction will cause disaster, those who feel justified in eating meat will easily believe that the animals they eat don't suffer greatly, and libertarians who feel that redistributing wealth is unjust will easily believe that it raises unemployment. We shouldn't assume that differing moral beliefs on practical questions are caused by fundamental moral agreement combined with differing nonmoral beliefs. Often the differing nonmoral beliefs are caused by fundamental moral disagreement. As we have no precise way of quantifying the breadth of disagreement or determining its epistemic consequences, it's unclear exactly how much disagreement the argument requires. While this makes the argument difficult to evaluate, it shouldn't stop us from proceeding, as we have to use the unclear notion of widespread disagreement in ordinary epistemic practice. If 99.9% of botanists agree on some issue about plants, non-botanists should defer to their authority and believe as most of them do. But if disagreement between botanists is suitably widespread, non-botanists should remain agnostic. A more precise and systematic account of when disagreement is widespread enough to generate particular epistemic consequences would be very helpful. Until we have one, we must employ the unclear notion of widespread disagreement, or some similar notion, throughout epistemic practice. Against the background of widespread moral disagreement, there may still be universal or near-universal agreement on some moral questions. For example, perhaps all cultures agree that one should provide for one’s elderly parents, even though they generally disagree elsewhere. How do these narrow areas of moral agreement affect the argument? This all depends on whether the narrow agreement is reliably or unreliably caused. If narrow agreement results from a reliable process of belief-formation, it lets us avoid error, defeating the argument from disagreement. But widely accepted moral beliefs may result from widely prevailing unreliable processes leading everyone to the same errors. There's no special pressure to explain agreement in terms of reliable processes when disagreement is widespread. Explaining agreement in terms of reliable processes is preferable when we have some reason to think that the processes involved are generally reliable. Then we would want to understand cases of agreement in line with the general reliability of processes producing moral belief. But if disagreement is widespread, error is too. Since moral beliefs are so often false, invoking unreliable processes to explain them is better than invoking reliable ones. The next two sections discuss this in more detail. We have many plausible explanations of narrow agreement on which moral beliefs are unreliably caused. Evolutionary and sociological explanations of why particular moral beliefs are widely accepted often invoke unreliable mechanisms.15 On these explanations, we agree because some moral beliefs were so important for reproductive fitness that natural selection made them innate in us, or so important to the interests controlling moral education in each culture that they were inculcated in everyone. For example, parents' influence over their children's moral education would explain agreement that one should provide for one's elderly parents. Plausible normative ethical theories won't systematically connect these evolutionary and sociological explanations with moral facts. If disagreement and error are widespread, they'll provide useful ways to reconcile unusual cases of widespread agreement with the general unreliability of the processes producing moral belief. 1.3 If there is widespread error about a topic, we should retain only those beliefs about it formed through reliable processes Now I'll defend 3. First I'll show how the falsity of others' beliefs undermines one's own belief. Then I'll clarify the notion of a reliable process. I'll consider a modification to 3 that epistemic internalists might favor, and show that the argument accommodates it. I'll illustrate 3's plausibility by considering cases where it correctly guides our reasoning. Finally, I'll show how 3 is grounded in the intuitive response to grave moral error. First, a simple objection: “Why should I care whether other people have false beliefs? That's a fact about other people, and not about me. Even if most people are wrong about some topic, I may be one of the few right ones, even if there's no apparent reason to think that my way of forming beliefs is any more reliable.” While widespread error leaves open the possibility that one has true beliefs, it reduces the probability that my beliefs are true. Consider a parallel case. I have no direct evidence that I have an appendix, but I know that previous investigations have revealed appendixes in people. So induction suggests that I have an appendix. Similarly, I know on the basis of 1 and 2 that people's moral beliefs are, in general, rife with error. So even if I have no direct evidence of error in my moral beliefs, induction suggests that they are rife with error as well. 3 invokes the reliability of the processes that produce our beliefs. Assessing processes of belief-formation for reliability is an important part of our epistemic practices. If someone tells me that my belief is entirely produced by wishful thinking, I can't simply accept that and maintain the belief. Knowing that wishful thinking is unreliable, I must either deny that my belief is entirely caused by wishful thinking or abandon the belief. But if someone tells me that my belief is entirely the result of visual perception, I'll maintain it, assuming that it concerns sizable nearby objects or something else about which visual perception is reliable. While providing precise criteria for individuating processes of belief-formation is hard, as the literature on the generality problem for reliabilism attests, individuating them somehow is indispensable to our epistemic practices.16 Following Alvin Goldman's remark that “It is clear that our ordinary thought about process types slices them broadly” (346), I'll treat cognitive process types like wishful thinking and visual perception as appropriately broad.17 Trusting particular people and texts, meanwhile, are too narrow. Cognitive science may eventually help us better individuate cognitive process types for the purposes of reliability assessments and discover which processes produce which beliefs. Epistemic internalists might reject 3 as stated, claiming that it isn't widespread error that would justify giving up our beliefs, but our having reason to believe that there is widespread error. They might also claim that our justification for believing the outputs of some process depends not on its reliability, but on what we have reason to believe about its reliability. The argument will still go forward if 3 is modified to suit internalist tastes, changing its antecedent to “If we have reason to believe that there is widespread error about a topic” or changing its consequent to “we should retain only those beliefs about it that we have reason to believe were formed through reliable processes.” While 3's antecedent might itself seem unnecessary on the original formulation, it's required for 3 to remain plausible on the internalist modification. Requiring us to have reason to believe that any of our belief-formation processes are reliable before retaining their outputs might lead to skepticism. The antecedent limits the scope of the requirement to cases of widespread error, averting general skeptical conclusions. The argument will still attain its conclusion under these modifications. Successfully defending the premises of the argument and deriving widespread error (5) and unreliability (7) gives those of us who have heard the defense and derivation reason to believe 5 and 7. This allows us to derive 8. (Thus the pronoun 'we' in 3, 6, and 8.) 3 describes the right response to widespread error in many actual cases. Someone in the 12th century, especially upon hearing the disagreeing views of many cultures regarding the origins of the universe, would do well to recognize that error on this topic was widespread and retreat to agnosticism about it. Only when modern astrophysics extended reliable empirical methods to cosmology would it be rational to move forward from agnosticism and accept a particular account of how the universe began. Similarly, disagreement about which stocks will perform better than average is widespread among investors, suggesting that one's beliefs on the matter have a high likelihood of error. It's wise to remain agnostic about the stock market without an unusually reliable way of forming beliefs – for example, the sort of secret insider information that it's illegal to trade on. 3 permits us to hold onto our moral beliefs in individual cases of moral disagreement, suggesting skeptical conclusions only when moral disagreement is widespread. When we consider a single culture's abhorrent moral views, like the Greeks' acceptance of Telemachus and Odysseus' murders of the servant women, we don't think that maybe the Greeks were right to see nothing wrong and we should reconsider our outrage. Instead, we're horrified by their grave moral error. I think this is the right response. We're similarly horrified by the moral errors of Hindus who burned widows on their husbands' funeral pyres, American Southerners who supported slavery and segregation, our contemporaries who condemn homosexuality, and countless others. The sheer number of cases like this requires us to regard moral error as a pervasive feature of the human condition. Humans typically form moral beliefs through unreliable processes and have appendixes. We are humans, so this should reduce our confidence in our moral judgments. The prevalence of error in a world full of moral disagreement demonstrates how bad humans are at forming true moral beliefs, undermining our own moral beliefs. Knowing that unreliable processes so often lead humans to their moral beliefs, we'll require our moral beliefs to issue from reliable processes. 1.4 If there is widespread error about morality, there are no reliable processes for forming moral beliefs A reliable process for forming moral beliefs would avert skeptical conclusions. I'll consider several processes and argue that they don't help us escape moral skepticism. Ordinary moral intuition, whether it involves a special rational faculty or our emotional responses, is shown to be unreliable by the existence of widespread error. The argument from disagreement either prevents reflective equilibrium from generating moral conclusions or undermines it. Conceptual analysis is reliable, but delivers the wrong kind of knowledge to avert skepticism. If all our processes for forming moral beliefs are unreliable, moral skepticism looms. 4 is false only because of one process – phenomenal introspection, which lets us know of the goodness of pleasure, as the second half of this paper will discuss. Widespread error guarantees the unreliability of any process by which we form all or almost all of our moral beliefs. While widespread error allows some processes responsible for a small share of our moral beliefs to predominantly create true beliefs, it implies that any process generating a very large share of moral belief must be highly error-prone. Since the process produced so many of our moral beliefs, and so many of them are erroneous, it must be responsible for a large share of the error. If more of people's moral beliefs were true, things would be otherwise. Widespread truth would support the reliability of any process that produced most or all of our moral beliefs, since that process would be responsible for so much true belief. But given widespread error, ordinary moral intuition must be unreliable. This point provides a forceful response to Moorean opponents who insist that we can't give up the reliability of a process by which we form all or nearly all of our beliefs on an important topic, since this would permit counterintuitive skeptical conclusions. Even if this Moorean response helps against external world skeptics who employ counterfactual thought experiments involving brains in vats, it doesn't help against moral skeptics who use 1 and 2 to derive widespread actual error. Once we accept that widespread error actually obtains, a great deal of human moral knowledge has already vanished. Insisting on the reliability of the process then seems implausible and pointless. I'll briefly consider two conceptions of moral intuition – as a special rational faculty by which we grasp non-natural moral facts, and as a process by which our emotions lead us to form moral beliefs – and show how widespread error guarantees their unreliability. Some philosophers regard moral intuition as involving a special rational faculty that lets us know non-natural moral facts.18 They argue that knowledge on many topics including mathematics, logic, and modality involves this rational faculty, so moral knowledge might operate similarly. This suggests a way for them to defend the reliability of moral intuition in the face of widespread error: if intuition is reliable about these other things, its overall reliability across moral and nonmoral areas allows us to reliably form moral beliefs by using it. This defense won't work. When an epistemic process is manifestly unreliable on some topic, as widespread error shows any process responsible for most of our moral beliefs to be, the reliability of that process elsewhere won't save it on that topic. Even if testimony is reliable, this doesn't imply the reliability of compulsive gamblers' testimony about the next spin of the roulette wheel. Even if intuition remains reliable elsewhere, widespread disagreement still renders it unreliable in ethics. I see ordinary moral intuition as a process of emotional perception in which our feelings cause us to form moral beliefs.19 Just as visual experiences of color cause beliefs about the colors of surfaces, emotional experiences cause moral beliefs. Pleasant feelings like approval, admiration, or hope in considering actions, persons, or states of affairs lead us to believe they are right, virtuous or good. Unpleasant emotions like guilt, disgust, or horror in considering actions, persons, or states of affairs lead us to believe they are wrong, vicious, or bad. We might have regarded this as a reliable way to know about moral facts, just as visual perception is a reliable way to know about color, if not for widespread error. But because of widespread error, we can only see it as an unreliable process responsible for our dismal epistemic situation. Reflective equilibrium is the prevailing methodology in normative ethics today. It involves modifying our beliefs about particular cases and general principles to make them cohere. Whether or not nonmoral propositions like the premises of the argument from disagreement are admissible in reflective equilibrium, widespread error prevents reflective equilibrium from reliably generating a true moral theory, as I'll explain. If the premises of the argument from disagreement are admitted into reflective equilibrium, the argument can be reconstructed there, and reflective equilibrium will dictate that we give up all of our moral beliefs. To avoid this conclusion, the premises of the argument from disagreement would have to be revised away on moral grounds. These premises are a metaethical claim about the objectivity of morality which seems to be a conceptual truth, an anthropological claim about the existence of disagreement, a very general epistemic claim about when we should revise our beliefs, and a more empirically grounded epistemic claim about our processes of belief-formation and their reliability. While reflective equilibrium may move us to revise substantive moral beliefs in view of other substantive moral beliefs, claims of these other kinds are less amenable to such revision. Unless ambitious arguments for revising these nonmoral claims away succeed, we must follow the argument to its conclusion and accept that reflective equilibrium makes moral skeptics of us.20 If only moral principles and judgments are considered in reflective equilibrium, it won't make moral skeptics of us, but the argument from disagreement will undermine its conclusions. The argument forces us to give up the pre-existing moral beliefs against which we test various moral propositions in reflective equilibrium. While we may be justified in believing something because it coheres with our other beliefs, this justification goes away once we see that those beliefs should be abandoned. Coherence with beliefs that we know we should give up doesn't confer justification. Now I'll consider conceptual analysis. It can produce moral beliefs about conceptual truths – for example, that the moral supervenes on the nonmoral, and that morality is objective. It also may provide judgments about relations between different moral concepts – perhaps, that if the only moral difference between two actions is that one would produce morally better consequences than the other, doing what produces better consequences is right. I regard conceptual analysis as reliable, so that the argument from disagreement does not force us to give up the beliefs about morality it produces. Unfortunately, if analytic naturalism is false, as has been widely held in metaethics since G. E. Moore, conceptual analysis won't provide all the knowledge we need to build a normative ethical theory.21 Even when it relates moral concepts like goodness and rightness to each other, it doesn't tell us that anything is good or right to begin with. That's the knowledge we need to avoid moral skepticism. So far I've argued that our epistemic and anthropological situation, combined with plausible metaethical and epistemic principles, forces us to abandon our moral beliefs. But if a reliable process of moral belief-formation exists, 4 is false, and we can answer the moral skeptic. The rest of this paper discusses the only reliable process I know of. 2.1 Phenomenal introspection reveals pleasure's goodness Phenomenal introspection, a reliable way of forming true beliefs about our experiences, produces the belief that pleasure is good. Even as our other processes of moral belief-formation prove unreliable, it provides reliable access to pleasure's goodness, justifying the positive claims of hedonism. This section clarifies what phenomenal introspection and pleasure are and explains how phenomenal introspection provides reliable access to pleasure's value. Section 2.2 argues that pleasure's goodness is genuine moral value, rather than value of some other kind. In phenomenal introspection we consider our subjective experience, or phenomenology, and determine what it's like. Phenomenal introspection can be reliable while dreaming or hallucinating, as long as we can determine what the dreams or hallucinations are like. By itself, phenomenal introspection doesn't produce beliefs about things outside experience, or about relations between our experiences and non-experiential things. So it doesn't produce judgments about the rightness of actions or the goodness of non-experiential things. It can only tell us about the intrinsic properties of experience itself. Phenomenal introspection is generally reliable, even if mistakes about immediate experience are possible. Experience is rich in detail, so one could get some of the details wrong in belief. Under adverse conditions involving false expectations, misleading evidence about what one's experiences will be, or extreme emotional states that disrupt belief-formation, larger errors are possible. Paradigmatically reliable processes like vision share these failings. Vision sometimes produces false beliefs under adverse conditions, or when we're looking at complex things. Still, it's so reliable as to be indispensible in ordinary life. Regarding phenomenal introspection as unreliable is about as radical as skepticism about the reliability of vision. While contemporary psychologists reject introspection into one's motivations and other psychological causal processes as unreliable, phenomenal introspection fares better. Daniel Kahneman, for example, writes that “experienced utility is best measured by moment-based methods that assess the experience of the present.”22 Even those most skeptical about the reliability of phenomenal introspection, like Eric Schwitzgebel, concede that we can reliably introspect whether we are in serious pain.23 Then we should be able to introspectively determine what pain is like. So I'll assume the reliability of phenomenal introspection. One can form a variety of beliefs using phenomenal introspection. For example, one can believe that one is having sound experiences of particular noises and visual experiences of different shades of color. When looking at a lemon and considering the phenomenal states that are yellow experiences, one can form some beliefs about their intrinsic features – for example, that they're bright experiences. And when considering experiences of pleasure, one can make some judgments about their intrinsic features – for example, that they're good experiences. Just as one can look inward at one's experience of lemon yellow and recognize its brightness, one can look inward at one's experience of pleasure and recognize its goodness.24 When I consider a situation of increasing pleasure, I can form the belief that things are better than they were before, just as I form the belief that there's more brightness in my visual field as lemon yellow replaces black. And when I suddenly experience pain, I can form the belief that things are worse in my experience than they were before. Having pleasure consists in one's experience having a positive hedonic tone. Without descending into metaphor, it's hard to give a further account of what pleasure is like than to say that when one has it, one feels good. As Aaron Smuts writes in defending the view of pleasure as hedonic tone, “to 'feel good' is about as close to an experiential primitive as we get.” 25 Fred Feldman sees pleasure as fundamentally an attitude rather than a hedonic tone.26 But as long as hedonic tones are real components of experience, phenomenal introspection will reveal pleasure's goodness. Opponents of the hedonic tone account of pleasure usually concede that hedonic tones exist, as Feldman seems to in discussing “sensory pleasures,” which he thinks his view helps us understand. Even on his view of pleasure, phenomenal introspection can produce the belief that some hedonic tones are good while others are bad. There are many different kinds of pleasant experiences. There are sensory pleasures, like the pleasure of tasting delicious food, receiving a massage, or resting your tired limbs in a soft bed after a hard day. There are the pleasures of seeing that our desires are satisfied, like the pleasure of winning a game, getting a promotion, or seeing a friend succeed. These experiences differ in many ways, just as the experiences of looking at lemons and the sky on a sunny day differ. It's easy to see the appeal of Feldman's view that pleasures “have just about nothing in common phenomenologically” (79). But just as our experiences in looking at lemons and the sky on a sunny day have brightness in common, pleasant experiences all have “a certain common quality – feeling good,” as Roger Crisp argues (109).27 As the analogy with brightness suggests, hedonic tone is phenomenologically very thin, and usually mixed with a variety of other experiences.28 Pleasure of any kind feels good, and displeasure of any kind feels bad. These feelings may or may not have bodily location or be combined with other sensory states like warmth or pressure. “Pleasure” and “displeasure” mean these thin phenomenal states of feeling good and feeling bad. As Joseph Mendola writes, “the pleasantness of physical pleasure is a kind of hedonic value, a single homogenous sensory property, differing merely in intensity as well as in extent and duration, which is yet a kind of goodness” (442).29 What if Feldman is right and hedonic states feel good in fundamentally different ways? Then phenomenal introspection suggests a pluralist variety of hedonism. Each fundamental flavor of pleasure will have a fundamentally different kind of goodness, as phenomenal introspection more accurate than mine will reveal. This isn't my view, but I suggest it to those convinced that hedonic tones are fundamentally heterogenous. If phenomenal introspection reliably informs us that pleasure is good, how can anyone believe that their pleasures are bad? Other processes of moral belief-formation are responsible for these beliefs. Someone who feels disgust or guilt about sex may not only regard sex as immoral, but the pleasure it produces as bad. Even if phenomenal introspection on sexual pleasure disposes one to believe that it's good, stronger negative emotional responses to it may more strongly dispose one to believe that it's bad, following the emotional perception model suggested in section 1.4. Explaining disagreement about pleasure's value in terms of other processes lets hedonists maintain that phenomenal introspection univocally supports pleasure's goodness. As long as negative judgments of pleasure come from unreliable processes instead of phenomenal introspection, the argument from disagreement eliminates them. The parallel between yellow’s brightness and pleasure’s goodness demonstrates the objectivity of the value detected in phenomenal introspection. Just as anyone's yellow experiences objectively are bright experiences, anyone's pleasure objectively is a good experience.30 While one's phenomenology is often called one's “subjective experience”, facts about it are still objective. “Subjective” in “subjective experience” means “internal to the mind”, not “ontologically dependent on attitudes towards it.” My yellow-experiences objectively have brightness. Anyone who thought my yellow-experiences lacked brightness would be mistaken. Pleasure similarly is objectively good. It's true that anyone's pleasure is good. Anyone who denies this is mistaken. As Mendola writes, the value detected in phenomenal introspection is “a plausible candidate for objective value” (712). Even though phenomenal introspection only tells me about my own phenomenal states, I can know that others' pleasure is good. Of course, I can't phenomenally introspect their pleasures, just as I can't phenomenally introspect pleasures that I'll experience next year. But if I consider my experiences of lemon yellow and ask what it would be like if others had the same experiences, I must think that they would be having bright experiences. Similarly, if in a pleasant moment I consider what it's like for others to have exactly the experience I'm having, I must think that they're having good experiences. If they have exactly the same experiences I'm having, their experiences will have exactly the same intrinsic properties as mine. This is also how I know that if I have the same experience in the future, it'll have the same intrinsic properties. Even though the only pleasure I can introspect is mine now, I should believe that others' pleasures and my pleasures at other times are good, just as I should believe that yellow experienced by others and myself at other times is bright. My argument thus favors the kind of universal hedonism that supports utilitarianism, not egoistic hedonism.

That’s the highest layer of the framework debate- reliable processes disprove your theory.

Sinhababu 2 Neil Sinhababu (National University of Singapore) “The epistemic argument for hedonism” <http://philpapers.org/archive/SINTEA-3> JW

A full moral theory including accounts of rightness and virtue can be built from the deliverances of phenomenal introspection combined with conceptual analysis. Shaver, Kagan, and I suggest that phenomenal introspection reveals pleasure to have a kind of goodness that makes states of affairs better in consequentialist moral theories. A state of affairs thus is pro tanto better as there is more pleasure and pro tanto worse as there is more displeasure. More pleasure makes states of affairs better. Conceptual analysis here connects the concept of goodness with the concept of a better state of affairs, and with other moral concepts like rightness and virtue. Even if conceptual analysis cannot connect the moral and the nonmoral as a full normative ethical theory requires, it reveals connections between our moral concepts. For example, the following propositions or something like them seem to be conceptual truths: states of affairs are pro tanto better insofar as they include more goodness, an action is pro tanto better insofar as it causally contributes to better states of affairs, and agents are pro tanto more virtuous insofar as they desire that better states of affairs obtain. These putative conceptual truths about pro tanto relations do not contradict strong forms of deontology, as they allow that obligations may trump good consequences in determining right action. Utilitarians who build their theories along these lines can treat deontology as a conceptually coherent position whose substantive claims are in fact not favored by evidence from any reliable processes. So they need not treat utilitarianism itself as a conceptual truth and run afoul of Moore's open question argument. If the argument from disagreement forces us to abandon belief in all other moral facts, introspecting pleasure's goodness and following these conceptual pro tanto connections to conclusions involving other moral concepts may be the only way to develop a full moral theory through reliable processes.

Thus, the standard is maximizing happiness.

Prefer the standard:

1. Means based theories devolve to util-there’s no intent foresight distinction: if we’re knowledgeable about the consequence of an action then we calculate that into our intention because we could always decide not to act.

2. Actor specificity. Policymaking must be consequentialist since collective action results in conflicts that only util can resolve. Side constraints paralyze state action since policy makers have to consider tradeoffs between multiple people. States lack intentionality since they're composed of multiple individuals—there is no act-omission distinction for them since they create permissions and prohibitions in terms of policies so authorizing action could never be considered an omission

### Underview

1. Prefer a comparing worlds paradigm—the neg must prove proactive desirability of a competitive advocacy. Truth-testing gives the neg an infinite amount of NIBs-they can prove morality doesn’t exist, it’s inaccessible, or read multiple side constraint theories. If they have to prove desirability then they share assumptions with the aff which levels out the playing field, so it’s key to fairness.

2. Use epistemic modesty to evaluate the normative framework debate-that’s probability of the moral theory multiplied by the action’s value under the theory if it were true. We can never be totally confident in any conclusion-humans make mistakes evaluating arguments all the time. Being ahead on the framework debate doesn’t create 100% confidence- rather we should account for our errors by granting credence to both contentions.

#### 3. No substitution effect- empirics prove the aff solves crime

Cook and Ludwig 03 Philip J. Cook (ITT/Sanford Professor of Public Policy at Duke University) and Jens Ludwig (Nonresident Senior Fellow, Economic Studies) Evaluating Gun Policy: Effects on Crime and Violence 2003 JW

Although definitive conclusions are hard to come by, it seems that the hand-gun ban in Britain may have helped to sustain the mid-1990s reversal of the buildup to the relatively high handgun crime levels of a few years earlier. Crime and firearm crimes fell in the immediate aftermath of the ban, but that trend is subsequently ended: according to statistics on recorded crimes, current rates are near pre-ban levels. It can be stated with more certainty that the handgun ban has not resulted in any sort of crime nightmare in Britain, as some had feared. First, the handgun ban did not lead to a perverse effect, where fewer guns in the hands of law-abiding citizens generated a huge crime spree by gun-toting crim-inals.83 Second, the handgun ban did not lead to a noticeable substitution toward shotgun crime, though shotguns have long been by far the most commonly avail-able type of gun, and fears of such a substitution are often voiced in discussion about proposed handgun controls in the United States.84 Britain remains a na-tion with enviably low levels of homicide and firearm crime

# 1AR

### New off

#### Interpretation – negative advocacies must be unconditional.

#### Violation –

#### Standards –

1. Stratskew- aff can never form a coherent strategy to answer the CP since it gets kicked at any time. If I read turns, they can kick for a positive time tradeoff but if I undercover then it’s game over. Outweighs: A. structural skew- the CPs a Nib since answering it will never be sufficient for me, substantive abuse is overcome by just being a better debater. B. 1AR time loss comes first- already severely disadvantaged by 746 skew, condo furthers neg side bias, impact turns neg fairness args.

2. Clash- condo decreases argument interaction because neg has a strategic incentive to kick out of the most undercovered advocacy and avoid objections to the other one. Kills education since you don’t have to answer arguments and clash with me. Outweighs: A. controls the internal link to all types education-even if policymaking are valuable, there is no value to engaging in that kind of debate without substantive clash. B. modeling policymakers exactly is useless-that would also justify getting rid of speech times and not spreading.

## Case

### High Probability 1st

#### High probability impacts come first.

1. Magnitude-lack of credible specific brink means that we don’t know when the neg impacts will occur but the aff impact aggregates every day, meaning the magnitude will be greater by the time your scenario occurs.

2. reversibility-systemic impacts create irreversible harms to people-we can’t un-murder someone, but we can intervene to solve impacts that rely on lots of link chains.

3. timeframe-violence happens daily whereas your DAs go through a series of steps. New political developments can drastically change the probability of your link chain, but there are no comparable variables that will likely change the probability of violence.

4. Extinction first justifies not picking up a pen because it could cause nuke war; that causes policy paralysis

## Generic Ptx

### trix

#### \_\_ No link. Fiat means the aff happens immediately so there’s no debate in congress and no loss of polcap.

#### \_\_ No link. Any rational policymaker would just do the aff and pass the bill.

#### \_\_ No link. Voting neg means the plan was brought up for a vote and defeated, which means polcap was still expended so there’s no net benefit to the squo.

### Polcap

#### No polcap left- last term.

Collinson 4-23-16 Stephen (CNN) “Obama’s long goodbye” WMUR 9 <http://www.wmur.com/politics/obamas-long-goodbye/39178476> NS

**The sun is** slowly beginning to **set on** Barack **Obama's presidency. He is wringing every last ounce of power from his remaining time in office, nominating a Supreme Court justice, making a** historic **visit to Cuba and barging** Friday **into Britain**'s debate over whether to leave the European Union. But **the inexorable ebbing of time and influence that overtakes second term presidencies is becoming more noticeable** with every week that goes by as some of his official duties begin to take on a poignant, valedictory tone. "I still have a few more months," Obama joked during a town hall meeting with British young people in London on Saturday when asked how he viewed his legacy. "Actually, eight months and 52 days -- not that I'm counting. I just made that up, I actually don't know," Obama said, adding that he would not have a good sense of his legacy for another 10 years. In the most tangible sign yet of Obama's long goodbye, The New York Times reported this week that **presidential aides have begun the process that will transition the** mammoth U.S. **government into the hands of the 45th President** next January. But there are also less formal signs that it will soon be time to cede the reins of power. At times, **Obama's trip to Britain seemed more like a farewell tour.** He lunched with Queen Elizabeth II and reminisced with David Cameron about their years in power together. "David and I shared an extraordinary partnership," Obama said at a Friday news conference with the British leader, who returned the compliment. "I've always found Barack someone who gives sage advice," Cameron said. "He's a man with a very good heart and he's been a very good friend and always will be a good friend, I know, to the United Kingdom." The President, meanwhile, presented the Queen with a 90th birthday gift: a book showing photos of her meeting with past U.S. presidents dating back to a 1951 encounter with Harry S. Truman when she visited Washington as a princess. The gift was a tacit admission that **Obama's administration**, like others before it, **will soon pass into history.** Obama has already delivered his final State of the Union address, his last budget and hosted the annual St. Patrick's Day visit by the prime minister of Ireland one last time. He recently presided over his final meeting of the nuclear security summit that was his brainchild amid doubts that the event -- now deprived of Russian participation -- would outlive his presidency. He will make his final tour of annual global summits later in the year, and embark on his farewell trip to Asia -- a region synonymous with his presidency. Back home on Thursday, Obama will host one of the most treasured rituals of his pres

### Won’t Pass

#### Won’t pass- political infighting.

Gehrke 4-22-16 Joel “Dems in the driver’s seat on criminal justice reform bill” Washington Examiner http://www.washingtonexaminer.com/dems-resisting-gop-demands-for-criminal-justice-reform/article/2589227

**Senate Democrats are demanding that Republicans abandon their hope of using a criminal justice reform bill to** **expand mens rea**, a legal doctrine that prevents defendants from being charged with crimes they didn't know they were committing, and their opposition may end up shifting the bill even though Republicans control both the House and Senate. Democrats have charged that Republicans are pushing for the language to make it harder to bring charges against companies, and say they're missing the point of the bill. "It has nothing to do with sentencing and rehabilitation," Rhode Island Sen. Sheldon Whitehouse, one of the lead Democratic negotiators of the criminal justice reform package, told the Washington Examiner**.** "It's a voyage into a whole new territory that the bill doesn't cover, which is the underlying substantive federal criminal laws. If they want to go there, we've got lots we'd like to look at." **Those objections are complicating Senate** Majority **Whip** John **Cornyn's** **attempt to recruit support** **for the bill,** **which faces significant opposition** **from Republicans** who hesitate to agree to the early release of any federal prisoners. Cornyn and his allies — most notably Senate Judiciary Committee chairman Chuck Grassley, R-Iowa, and Tea Party Sen. Mike Lee of Utah — revised the bill to alleviate concern that violent offenders would benefit from the reforms, but they're still working to convince most Republicans that they achieved their goal. They've had some success in that effort, gaining the support of Sen. Thad Cochran, R-Miss., and Illinois Sen. Mark Kirk, one of the most vulnerable Republicans up for reelection. "We are spending about $60,000 per prisoner every year in Illinois to incarcerate individuals who leave prison more dangerous than when they arrived — everyone knows this system is broken," Kirksaid on April 12. "My changes to this bill direct savings to fight gangs, which are too often taking children away from their families in Chicagoland." Behind the scenes, Cornyn's GOP opponents are campaigning against the revised version of the bill. "This isn't surprising coming from one of the most liberal Republicans and only further demonstrates **there still isn't enough support in the Senate for a criminal leniency bill,"** one Senate GOP aide said in response to Kirk's announcement. Privately, some **Republicans grumble that the legislation does more to advance the priorities of the Democratic** minority than it does to advance traditional conservative criminal justice reforms, which would reduce the number of federal crimes, especially those committed unwittingly. That's why **the Democratic pushback against the GOP's mens rea reform request might make it even more difficult to move the bill**. "[F]or the past twenty-five years, a period over which the growth of the federal criminal law has come under increasing scrutiny, Congress has been creating over 500 new crimes per decade," the Heritage Foundation reported in 2008. "That pace is not steady from year to year, however; the data indicate that Congress creates more criminal offenses in election years." If Cornyn could add the *mens rea* language to the bill, he might reasonably count on the support of at least Sen. Orrin Hatch, R-Utah. But Senate **Democrats are** so far refusing to do so because they worry the provision would make it more difficult to prosecute corporate executives in a variety of cases. Some Republicans and outside activists hope that House Republicans will pass the criminal intent legislation as part of their reform package, believing that Democrats won't kill the entire criminal justice reform simply because of that policy complaint. But Whitehouse suggested he'd be **willing to see the whole bill go down rather than agree to that change**. "I think the mens rea stuff has to come out," he said. "And frankly, if the mens rea scheme was the Koch brothers scheme all along when they got behind this, to load it up with their corporate protection amendments and this was a Trojan horse all along, then shame on them. We weren't negotiated with in good faith, at that point."

### Impact Turn

#### New changes mean CJS reform is worse for violent offenders.. Also, won’t pass, no support and elections.

Lind 4-28-16 Dara “Criminal-justice reform in Congress has officially caved to a dangerous myth” Vox http://www.vox.com/2016/2/9/10949310/criminal-justice-reform-bill

Criminal justice reform in Congress was always a compromise — not just between Democrats and Republicans, but between legislators who believe the US needs to end mass incarceration and those who aren't so sure. The question was how far the bill's supporters could go in making compromises on compromises, to win over remaining skeptics, without giving in to the very myths that made mass incarceration so potent. The Senate's criminal justice reform bill — which passed out of committee last year, but was reintroduced with substantial changes on Thursday — has tipped over into the latter. **The bill is being changed to allow fewer people convicted of violent crimes to apply for release.** As a press release from Sen. Chuck Grassley (R-IA), the chair of the Senate Judiciary Committee, puts it: "The authors fine-tuned some provisions to ensure violent criminals do not benefit from reduced sentence opportunities established by the bill. It now expressly excludes offenders convicted of any serious violent felony from retroactive early release." In exchange, it's allowing more first-time, nonviolent drug offenders to get shorter sentences. The changes were an attempt to gain broader support from the bill among skeptics — it now has dozens of cosponsors in the Senate, and support from the National District Attorneys' Association. It does this by neutralizing the attacks opponents like Sen. Tom Cotton (R-AR) have been making; Cotton's been saying for months that the bill would result in the release of "thousands of violent felons." But it's not clear that the bill will make it to the floor in the short time left before the end of this Congress — much less that the House and Senate will be able to agree on a reform bill. Meanwhile, the futures of thousands of people might be at stake. And the proposed changes — modest though they might seem in the context of the legislative process — reinforce one of the myths of criminal justice that does the most damage to prospects of reform: the idea that the US should only get more lenient toward "nonviolent" offenders. The changes would bar a few thousand prisoners from chance at early release There are two broad trends in the changes made to the Senate bill: People convicted of violent crimes are less likely to get a chance to reduce their sentences. People convicted of drug crimes are more likely. Under current law, if you're a "career criminal" (a phrase that's defined so vaguely the Supreme Court struck down part of its definition in June), simply possessing a gun is a crime with a 15-year minimum sentence. As originally written, the Senate bill would have dropped that minimum down to 10 years — and allowed people currently imprisoned under it to apply for reductions in their sentences. Both of those **reductions**, for new and current prisoners, **are now being cut out of the bill entirely.** On the other hand, sentencing reductions for drug offenders are expanded. Drug prisoners are now eligible to get exempted from mandatory minimum sentences even if they have a prior misdemeanor or "minor" conviction, or if they were "minor players" in a larger drug "conspiracy." (Of course, even under the original bill, they weren't eligible for either of these "safety valves" if they engaged in any violence during their crimes.) Other reforms are being narrowed in some ways, but broadened in others. Reduction of a 20-year minimum sentence for drugs, for example, is now not an option to any prisoner who's ever been convicted of a "serious violent felony" — but it's newly available to people with prior drug convictions if those convictions happened a long time ago. The clearest evidence that the Senate's trying to split hairs between "violent" and "nonviolent" crime: Reforms for people who've been convicted of an extra sentence for possessing a firearm while committing a violent or drug trafficking crime. In the worst cases, this has resulted in first-time offenders like Weldon Angelos, who was sentenced to 55 years in prison for having a gun on him during a marijuana bust. The Senate bill reduces the length of the minimum sentence and limits when it can be used — and allows current prisoners to apply for shorter sentences under the new laws. But under the reported changes, prisoners who'd been convicted of possessing a firearm during a violent crime would no longer have the chance even to apply for a shorter sentence. Only drug prisoners would. Together, the changes mean that thousands of people will no longer get the chance to seek early releases from prison. The United States Sentencing Commission estimated that 2,317 current prisoners would be eligible for shorter "career criminal" sentences and another 2,500 would be eligible for the extra firearm sentence — though some of those 2,500 will still be eligible. The expansions of some reforms to benefit drug offenders will probably allow people to apply for reduced sentences (or to get shorter sentences in the future) who wouldn't have been able to. But the real significance of the changes is what they say about the politics of sentencing reform. And what they say is nothing good. The move would kill the best and boldest parts of criminal justice reform **You simply can't fix mass incarceration** in America **if you're unwilling to shorten the prison sentences of anyone who could be considered a "violent" criminal.** That's especially true in state prisons, where the vast majority of US prisoners are held and where half of them are serving sentences for violent crimes. When politicians talk about criminal justice reform, they tend to leave out this inconvenient fact. They prefer to talk about "nonviolent drug offenders" — even when they're talking about state prisoners. The original Senate bill went beyond this. It didn't do anything too risky — the laws it proposed to change around firearms and "career criminals" are so bad that federal judges routinely complain about them. But on an issue where states have usually led and the federal government has followed, **the original Senate bill could have made a statement that states needed to dig deeper and reform sentencing for "violent offenders." Instead, it's sending the message that helping violent offenders is politically radioactive. This doesn't satisfy people who are worried about "violent" criminals anyway There's no indication that making these changes will allow the Senate and House to pass** sentencing reform bills. There are similarities between the House and Senate bills that have been introduced so far, but they'd still need to go through a conference to combine them. **Key House members have already rejected the Senate's approach**, and are instead slowly rolling out their own criminal justice reform bills. **Republicans in both chambers are engaged in a standoff with** the **Obama** administration over a proposal to change criminal intent standards, which would mostly help people accused of "white collar" regulatory crimes. And **no one wants to pass major laws on the eve of a presidential election.** Senate Majority Leader Mitch **McConnell is** reportedly **undecided** **on whether to bring criminal justice reform to the floor** of the Senate for a vote. The reintroduction of the bill on Thursday appeared to be an attempt to persuade him to do it — by showing that the bill was now uncontroversial enough to get lots of Senators on board, and that the main criticism of the bill's main critic (Sen. Cotton) had been neutralized. Except that Cotton admits he thinks there's more to a "violent" offender than just being convicted of a violent crime. This isn't as illogical as it sounds. By some estimates, as many as half of federal drug prisoners don't count as "low-level, nonviolent" drug offenders. Many government officials, including some of the senators who worked on sentencing reform, think that "nonviolent" should exclude inmates whose crimes involved a weapon — which often just means they had weapons on them when arrested. But the Senate bill, even with the new changes, would still reduce minimum sentences for drug offenders who had a gun on them but never used it. More importantly, though, prosecutors emphasize that many drug offenders are in prison for drug trafficking — which they consider "inherently violent." And Tom **Cotton** appears to be squarely in this camp. His spokesperson told the Washington Post in February: It is naive to think that dealing cocaine and taking part in its import and distribution is ‘nonviolent,' That’s a fantasy created by the bill’s supporters and no serious federal law enforcement expert would agree with it. If you believe that every drug dealer is violent, then you're not going to get on board with a bill reducing mandatory minimum sentences for drug crimes. You're not going to get on board with a bill that allows some drug offenders currently in prison to take classes and get jobs in exchange for "good time" credits. In short, you're **not going to support the Senate bill**, because that's what the Senate bill does. Maybe these are the changes that will get McConnell to bring sentencing reform to the floor. Maybe they'll provide the momentum for the House to move faster with its own bills. But that's not at all certain. **It's not nearly as certain as what's been given up.**

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### Perm

Permutation, do both. Policies in general are bad but there can be specific exceptions.

### Overview

#### Afropessimism is wrong and incorrect about history:

#### It’s not dismissed and wins rounds, means its a contradiction to say that Black performativity is socially dead- it happens in debate

#### Civil society isn’t static – black political ontology is transformative and not pre-determined

#### The Haitian Revolution – slaves overthrew French colonialism using tools of Revolution to pursue Black freedom

### Policy key

Anti-blackness isn’t ontological. Policy is the only thing that will remove it; perm’s key.

**Bouie 13** staff writer at The American Prospect, Making and Dismantling Racism, http://prospect.org/article/making-and-dismantling-racism

Over at The Atlantic, Ta-Nehisi Coates has been exploring the intersection of race and public policy, with a focus on white supremacy as a driving force in political decisions at all levels of government. This has led him to two conclusions: First, that anti-black racism as we understand it is a creation of explicit policy choices—the decision to exclude, marginalize, and stigmatize Africans and their descendants has as much to do with racial prejudice as does any intrinsic tribalism. And second, that it's possible to dismantle this prejudice using public policy. Here is Coates in his own words: Last night I had the luxury of sitting and talking with the brilliant historian Barbara Fields. One point she makes that very few Americans understand is that racism is a creation. You read Edmund Morgan’s work and actually see racism being inscribed in the law and the country changing as a result. If we accept that racism is a creation, then we must then accept that it can be destroyed. And if we accept that it can be destroyed, we must then accept that it can be destroyed by us and that it likely must be destroyed by methods kin to creation. **Racism was created by policy. It will** likely **only be** ultimately **destroyed by policy.** Over at his blog, Andrew Sullivan offers a reply: I don’t believe the law created racism any more than it can create lust or greed or envy or hatred. It can encourage or mitigate these profound aspects of human psychology – it can create racist structures as in the Jim Crow South or Greater Israel. But it can no more end these things that it can create them. A complementary strategy is finding ways for the targets of such hatred to become inured to them, to let the slurs sting less until they sting not at all. Not easy. But a more manageable goal than TNC’s utopianism. I can appreciate the point Sullivan is making, but I'm not sure it's relevant to Coates' argument. It is absolutely true that "Group loyalty is deep in our DNA," as Sullivan writes. And if you define racism as an overly aggressive form of group loyalty—basically just prejudice—then Sullivan is right to throw water on the idea that the law can "create racism any more than it can create lust or greed or envy or hatred." But Coates is making a more precise claim: That **there's nothing natural about the black/white divide** that has defined American history. White **Europeans had contact with black Africans** well **before** the trans-Atlantic **slave trade without** the emergence of an **anti-black racism. It took particular choices** made by particular people—in this case, plantation owners in colonial Virginia—**to make black** skin **a stigma**, to make the "one drop rule" a defining feature of American life for more than a hundred years. By **enslaving African** indentured **servants and allowing** their white **counterparts a chance for upward mobility**,

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